

Press ReleaseNational Labor Relations Board Office of the General Counsel

August 2, 2010

Contact:

Office of Public Affairs 202-273-1991 publicinfo@nlrb.gov www.nlrb.gov

Large healthcare union election in California to be conducted by mail

The National Labor Relations Board will conduct an election by mail which asks more than 40,000 employees of Kaiser Permanente if they want to switch unions, remain with their current union, or have no union at all.

The employees are currently represented by United Healthcare Workers (UHW), part of SEIU. The petitioner is the National Union of Healthcare Workers (NUHW), a breakaway union created by former leaders of UHW. A third choice would be for No Union. The position receiving a majority of votes will prevail; if there is no majority, there will be a runoff election between the top two vote-getters.

The election -- among the largest in the Agency's history -- presented challenges because the facilities are scattered throughout the state. Under the plans approved today by NLRB Regional Director Alan Reichard in Oakland, all balloting will be conducted by mail over a three-week period, beginning September 13. All ballots must be received by the close of business on October 4.

Voting kits, which will include ballots in English and Spanish, instructions and return envelopes, will be prepared and mailed by a private contractor under NLRB supervision. Ballots are set to be counted by NLRB personnel in Oakland beginning on October 6 and continuing through October 8 if necessary. All parties will have the right to send observers. A toll-free phone number will be established to respond to questions and concerns from voters.

The National Labor Relations Board is an independent federal agency vested with the power to safeguard employees' rights to organize and to determine whether to have unions as their bargaining representative. The agency also acts to prevent and remedy unfair labor practices committed by private sector employers and unions.